

Testimony of Donna Parris
In support of Connecticut Fair Housing Center

Senator Harp, Representative Walker, and members of the Committee, My name is Donna Parris, and I live in Dayville, CT.

I am here in support of continued funding for the Connecticut Fair Housing Center.

Thank you for allowing me to tell my story.

In November of 2006, I bought a modular home in Dayville, I own the home outright and pay rent for the land it sits on. The landlord is responsible for the septic system.

Since 2009, the septic system has overflowed more than a dozen times, causing me great physical pain. The frequent incidences of septic overflow have exacerbated my disabilities to the point that, on several occasions, I have become violently ill and required medical attention. I complained about the ongoing problems to my landlord and that is when the retaliation started.

I am a person with disabilities. Because of my disabilities, which cause me to pass out and lose sensation in my hands and feet, as well as other things, my doctor recommended that I have a live-in aide. If I did not have that aide I would be unable to maintain a daily schedule, which includes occasionally taking care of my two grandchildren, or I could suffer physical injury. When I requested permission to have a live-in aide, with a letter from my doctor citing a medical need for a live-in aide, my landlord responded with an ultimatum: either I assume the cost for the pumping out the septic system or they would evict me for having a live in aide and other reasons. When I refused to agree to pay for the septic repairs, my landlord tried to evict me.

I knew that was wrong, and attempted at that point to find a lawyer to help me. I could not find anyone to take my case. I actually found CT Fair Housing Center through an attorney in Rhode Island!

Since taking my case, the Fair Housing Center has filed a consumer protection complaint and federal lawsuit on my behalf, and they have succeeded in having the eviction proceedings withdrawn pursuant to a court order.

I take pride in my home, I take care of the landscaping and I have always paid my rent on time. When I moved to the park, I thought I would be able to spend the rest of my life in a home that allowed me to live fully and comfortably, and allowed for my physical limitations.

If it were not for the work of the Connecticut Fair Housing Center, I would not have been able to deal with all that has happened to me over the last 3 years, and I am grateful for their help.

Thank you for supporting their work in the past, and I hope you can continue to support the work of the Center, I don't know what I would have done without them.